

BOARD OF HEALTH Minutes

August 14th, 2008

Present: Sandy Sulsky, Ellen Pile, Nancy Gilbert.

Staff: Epi Bodhi,

Other: Nene Okunna, Bob Stover, Diana Stein –Select Board liaison

Meeting opened at 7:07 pm

I. Review & Receive

A) Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes from July 24th, 2008-Accepted as amended.

B) Mosquito Infestation Concern

Ms Bodhi brought to the Board's attention a call from an upset resident of Stanley Street about a mosquito infestation in the area. Ms Bodhi told the resident that mosquitoes were not being treated at this time but the resident can express her concerns in writing to the BOH. Ms Pile commented that there was currently no plan or discussion of spraying in the town.

II. New Business

A) Variance Request 39 Bay Road.

Bob Stover presented a request on behalf of Alice and Seymour Epstein to allow the replacement of the soil absorption system. They requested a variance to reduce the required water table separation from 5' to 4' so as to maintain the current elevation. Ms Gilbert raised concerns about the possible health impact of granting the variance as well as any impact it may leave on the pond and Plum Brook. After some discussion, Ms Pile moved that the variance be granted subject to Conservation Commission also approving the application. Ms Gilbert seconded it.

Passed unanimously.

III. Old Business

A) NPHPSP (National Public Health Performance Standards Program) Tool

Ms Bodhi presented NALBOH's (National Association of Local Boards of Health) power point on the National Performance guidance tool. Ms Pile thinks the tool is a good resource but questions how applicable it is in Amherst. Ms Sulsky questioned how the tool would be used in conjunction with the retreat. She feels that the retreat could be used to set the Board's goals and priorities for the coming years. Ms Pile reflected on the last BOH retreat that she attended and her preference that we spend a three hour retreat on priorities for the upcoming year. Ms Bodhi emphasized the need to include

the 10 essential services and 3 core functions of a public health provided by the tool as guidelines in the deliberations of the BOH. Ms Sulsky feels that some aspects of the tool might be useful but doing the survey as a whole seems burdensome. Other Board members agree. Members believe that the retreat should focus on the 3 core functions and 10 essential services and how the BOH works with the Health Department and other town agencies.

B) Outdoor Wood Boilers (OWBs)

Ms Bodhi presented the written public notice about OWB from 11/16/2006. The BOH had placed a moratorium on installing OWBs while it worked to create regulations. However, since the State was in the process of creating regulations for OWBs, the BOH decided to wait. The question remains, does the Board want to accept what DEP has drafted or create its own more stringent regulations? Ms Pile expressed her concerns on the sufficiency of state regulations to protect public health. She would like more information about the DEP regulations. Ms Bodhi will ask her DEP contact to suggest someone with an expertise in OWBs to come to the October BOH meeting and will invite the Agricultural Commission as well.

VI. Director's Reports

A) Cell Tower

Ms Bodhi reported on her research about FCC regulations. Town Counsel has informed the Town that an act by Congress has passed, health concerns may not be considered when locating a cell tower.

B) Beaver Removal Guidelines

Ms Bodhi asked Mr. Ziomek, Director of Conservation that the Board be invited to discuss this issue at a Conservation Commission meeting.

C) Well Regulations

Ms Bodhi sent the draft regulations to town Counsel for comment. The Board confirms that it will hold a public hearing about this issue in September.

D) 28 Shay Street

Ms Bodhi reported that she and Ms Bokina went to court with Town Counsel. She explained that Ms Bokina will draft a "punch list" of items that must be corrected before an October court date. Eric Bert, the property owner, his Attorney and David Keenan have agreed to comply with this.

E) Social Justice

Ms Bodhi reported that Barbara Love explained the SJ process to the Department Heads and also showed a segment of "Unnatural Causes". The whole process was well received. She also reported that the dialogue included a plan to meet on the 12th of August to come up with recommendations for the all day retreat with Department Heads to be held in early October. On this day, Department Heads will have a training in the morning and meet with the dialogue group in the afternoon.

F) New Health Inspector

Gary Courtemanche, the new Health Inspector began employment for 30 hours per week on Monday 11th of August, 2008. Unfortunately, Tom Dion

handed in his notice of resignation.

The department received 70 applicants for the administrative assistant position. The department is presently reviewing applications and scheduling interviews. Ms Bodhi hopes that someone will be employed by October at the latest.

G) Annual Report

Ms Bodhi reported that the annual report has been submitted.

She added that she had completed a survey by NACCHO which helped her identify areas other local public health departments need to concentrate on.

Ms Pile asked for an up date on the regionalization process. Ms Bodhi stated that she had requested a meeting of all health departments and BOHs in the Hampshire and Franklin county area to discuss this. The BOH in Hatfield had asked her to attend their meeting in September to provide them with more information on regionalization and in what ways the Health Department in Amherst can provide some services/inspections.

V. Schedule Next BOH Meeting/Agenda Closing Date

A) Next meeting will be September 25th 2008.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:50 pm

Epi Bodhi, Health Director
Approved: September 25, 2008